586. Consecrated women. It may even be said to be the current view of uncivilized peoples, up to the full development of the father family, that women have free control of their own persons until they are married, when they pass under a taboo which they are bound to observe. Therefore before marriage they may accumulate a dowry. Very many cases also occur of men-women and women-men, persons of either sex w[r]ho assume the functions and mode of life of the other. Cases also occur in barbarism of women consecrated to the gods. Among the Ewe-speaking peoples of West Africa[1] girls of ten or twelve are received and educated for three years in the chants and dances of worship, serving the priests. At the end of the time they become public women, but are under no reproach, because they are regarded as married to the god and acting under his direction. Properly they should be restricted to the worshipers at the temple, but they are not. Probably such was the original taboo which is now relaxed and decayed. Children whom such women bear belong to the god. The institution " is essentially religious in its origin and is

intimately connected with phallic worship/'

587. Sacral harlotry and child sacrifice. These observations may serve to introduce a study of the phenomena, so incomprehensible to us, of sacral prostitution and child sacrifice. That study is calculated to show us that the mores define right and wrong. It would be a great mistake to regard the above cases as mere aberrations of sex appetite. The usages had their origin in interests. Sacral harlotry was a substitute for the child sacrifice of females. The other incidental interests found advantage in it. It was an attempt to solve problems of life. It was regarded as conducive to welfare, and was connected with religion. It was kept up by the conservatism and pertinacity of religious usage until a later time and another set of conditions, when it became vicious.

588. Reproduction and food supply. The operations of nature by which plants and animals reproduce are of great interest and importance to man, because on them depends the abundance of

[1] Ellis, *Ewe-speaking Peoples-,* 141.